

## CLAIMS

I Claim:

1. A method for providing a personalized user environment on a computing system, the method comprising the following step:

5 (a) upon detection of user-supplied storage media, running a profile configuration program, the profile configuration program performing the following substeps:

(a.1) obtaining profile information stored on the user-supplied storage media, and

10 (a.2) temporarily installing the profile information on the computing system.

2. A method as in claim 1 wherein substep (a.1) includes the following substep:

15 requesting from a user an indication as to what items the user wants configured on the computing system.

3. A method as in claim 1 wherein in step (a) the following step is performed before performing substep (a.1):

20 obtaining a password from the user; and,  
verifying the password.

4. A method as in claim 1 wherein substep (a.2) includes the following substep:

25 installing the profile information on a random access memory (RAM) drive within memory of the computing system.

5. A method as in claim 1 wherein substep (a.2) includes the following substep:

30 temporarily installing the profile information on a hard drive within the computing system.

6. A method as in claim 1 wherein step (a) additionally comprises the following substeps:

35 (a.3) detecting user interactions that result in changes to the profile information temporarily installed on the computing system in substep (a.2); and,

(a.4) using the changes to update the profile information stored on the storage media.

5 7. A method as in claim 6 wherein substep (a.4) is performed during a user session on the computing system as the changes occur.

8. A method as in claim 6 wherein substep (a.4) is performed after completion of a user session on the computing system.

10 9. A method for providing a personalized user environment on a computing system, the method performed by a profile configuration program, the method comprising the following step:

(a) obtaining profile information stored on user-supplied storage media; and,

15 (b) temporarily installing the profile information on the computing system.

10. A method as in claim 9 wherein step (a) includes the following substep: requesting from a user an indication as to what items the user wants  
20 configured on the computing system.

11. A method as in claim 9 additionally comprising the following step performed before step (a):  
obtaining a password from the user; and,  
25 verifying the password.

12. A method as in claim 9 wherein step (b) includes the following substep: installing the profile information on a random access memory (RAM) drive within memory of the computing system.  
30

13. A method as in claim 9 wherein step (b) includes the following substep: temporarily installing the profile information on a hard drive within the computing system.

35 14. A method as in claim 9 additionally comprising the following steps:  
(c) detecting user interactions that result in changes to the profile information temporarily installed on the computing system in step (b); and,

(d) using the changes to update the profile information stored on the storage media.

5 15. A method as in claim 14 wherein step (b) is performed during a user session on the computing system as the changes occur.

16. A method as in claim 14 wherein step (b) is performed after completion of a user session on the computing system.

10 17. A computing system comprising:  
a storage media reader and writer; and,  
a profile configuration program for providing a personalized user environment  
on the computing system, wherein upon detection of user-supplied storage media  
being read by the storage media reader and writer, the profile configuration program  
15 obtains profile information stored on the user-supplied storage media, and temporarily  
installs the profile information on the computing system.

20 18. A computing system as in claim 17 wherein the profile configuration program installs the profile information on a random access memory (RAM) drive within memory of the computing system.

25 19. A computing system as in claim 17 wherein the profile configuration program temporarily installs the profile information on a hard drive within the computing system.

20. A computing system as in claim 17 wherein profile configuration program also detects user interactions that result in changes to the profile information temporarily installed on the computing system and uses the changes to update the profile information stored on the storage media.